

COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 17 September 2021

Statement from: Cllr Mrs P A Bradwell OBE - Deputy Leader and Executive Councillor for Children's Services, Community Safety and Procurement

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Children's Health

Throughout the pandemic, our Health Visitors and Nurses have continued to support Lincolnshire families. Some programmes were delivered virtually, but we are beginning to restore face-to-face sessions.

An extra £2.5m to improve mental health care and support for children and young people with complex needs was successfully secured from NHS England (Health and Justice) through a joint bid by the Council, NHS Lincolnshire, CCG and Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust. Our plans include the creation of a new trauma-informed Complex Needs Service to support children with high-harm and high-risk vulnerabilities. Implementation has already begun, with the full roll-out due to be completed by 2024.

We are currently reviewing and redesigning our services to support children and young people's mental health, emotional wellbeing and behavioural needs, to make it easier for families to access the right support at the right time. By September 2022, we aim to have introduced a transformed model of integrated, community-based services, with more focus on self-referral.

Children's Centres

Face-to-face sessions are restarting in our 48 children's centres and outreach venues, with an average of 350 early years sessions being delivered each week, alongside a range of learning and development opportunities. The activities have been positively received by families and attendance is increasing.

Supporting our Foster Carers

Caring2Learn has established a hub to provide support to fostering households, facilitated by our foster carer champions. We currently have 22 champions, who have supported over 150 households over the last year. Overall, more than 90% of fostering households have accessed this support.

In addition, Lincolnshire County Council is now a Foster Friendly Employer, offering staff additional benefits and flexibility to help them care for foster children. We are now encouraging other Lincolnshire employers to join the initiative.

Schools

Our schools are doing an amazing job meeting the many challenges arising from the pandemic, while continuing to provide our young people with a high-quality education. I would like to thank all our school leaders and staff and also our governing bodies for their efforts during a time of national crisis.

Schools continue to receive support from our education team and the Recover Lincolnshire programme, and I am pleased to see everyone's hard work recognised in the Ofsted visits and inspections that have taken place in a number of schools.

With no national examinations taking place this year, students have been provided with teacher-assessed grades for GCSE and A levels. Students achieved some very good results this year bearing in mind their education has been interrupted for 2 years as a result of the pandemic and I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate them all and wish them well for the next stage of their education, training or employment.

We received over 15,000 applications for schools places this year, with the vast majority of families once again being offered their first-choice.

Building Communities of Specialist Provision Strategy

Despite the pandemic, we are making excellent progress on our special schools improvement project. This will see £86m spent on the expansion and development of 13 specialist settings over the next few years. The new Boston Endeavour Academy has recently been completed and will open in September, providing space for 140 pupils with 16 classrooms and additional specialist teaching spaces. It also benefits from a hydrotherapy pool, sensory and soft play rooms and dedicated therapy spaces. Outside, there are hard and soft-surfaced play areas, as well as a sensory garden and wildlife areas. Improvements at Willoughby Academy and The Eresby School are also underway and due to be completed in early 2022.

Lincolnshire Music Service

The Lincolnshire Music Service has been named 'Youth Organisation of 2020' by the Classical Music Digital Awards in recognition of their amazing achievements in online music teaching and video collaborations during the pandemic. Despite Covid restrictions, the music service has continued to teach music to our children either in-person or via an innovative online offer. In July, the service took part in an online Share Sound Ensemble performance, with over 150 Lincolnshire children participating.

ADULT SKILLS & FAMILY LEARNING

2020/2021 has proved to be a challenging year for the Adult Skills & Family Learning Service as a result of the uncertainties around Covid-19. Fantastic work has taken place by our contracted Learning Providers and Family Learning tutors to develop a blended programme so that learners have the choice of studying either in the classroom or in a

virtual learning environment. End of year figures show that we worked with over 5,300 learners, delivering 1,206 qualifications. Throughout 2020/2021 qualification provision continued to be aimed at targeted learners with a result of 47% of the qualifications achieved by male learners and 33% by learners who previously had no, or low levels of qualifications. In spite of the challenges faced, the programme continues to deliver good outcomes for the learners involved.

Contracts have been signed with 22 Learning Providers to deliver training courses to 6,179 learners in the 2021/2022 academic year. The service will continue to prioritise under-represented learners with 40% of provision planned to be delivered in areas of deprivation, targeting unemployed learners and those with low levels of qualifications who will benefit the most from our programme.

COMMUNITY SAFETY

Stay Safe Partnership

The Stay Safe Partnership continues to be a trusted source of preventative education for schools and academies in the county. The Community Safety Team works in collaboration with Lincolnshire Police, Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue, Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership, We Are with You, Futures4Me and Domestic Abuse specialists to ensure that age appropriate preventative messages relating to road and fire safety, internet safety, anti-social behaviour, alcohol and drugs awareness, healthy relationships, county lines and knife crime are actively promoted in Lincolnshire schools.

The 2020/21 academic year proved particularly challenging for the partnership, with Covid restrictions impacting on their ability to deliver safety messages to pupils in a classroom setting. In response, the Stay Safe Team developed alternative methods of delivery including virtual 'Stay Safe Days', both independent student and teacher led modules. By the end of the academic year, as a result of moving to this blended learning approach, the team had delivered sessions to 14,164 secondary and 7,159 primary school pupils.

The team also created YouTube online safety content for pupils and delivered live stream sessions to parents through the LSCP YouTube channel, covering matters such as parental controls, grooming, sexting and bullying. To date, these live stream resources have been viewed 1,961 times.

Domestic Abuse

The Domestic Abuse Act came into effect on 1 April 2021. This legislation places a new legal duty on the County Council to provide support to victims of domestic abuse and their children in refuges and other safe accommodation. Preparatory work, including a comprehensive review and consultation, ensured the Council were well placed to meet the requirements of the statutory framework when the legislation came into force. One of the

necessary changes was to the governance arrangements for Domestic Abuse (DA), to one that is better able to deal with the complex nature and breadth of DA, whilst also meeting the requirements of the Domestic Abuse Act. The partnership has now transitioned to these new arrangements, and there is now a separate Domestic Abuse Partnership Board that sits alongside the Safer Lincolnshire Partnership, the Lincolnshire Children's and Lincolnshire Adult's Safeguarding Board. The partnership has excellent representation at both operational and strategic levels, from a wide range of agencies.

During this period the Community Safety team, in conjunction with colleagues in the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, were successful at securing additional funding from the Ministry of Justice. This funding will enable EDAN Lincs, the Council's commissioned provider of DA support services, to invest in new areas of specialist provision; including a DA Court Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA), a Rural IDVA, a CHIDVA (Children's IDVA) as well as additional community IDVA and Outreach provision.

Safer Lincolnshire Partnership

The Safer Lincolnshire Partnership, of which LCC is a member, has a statutory duty to work together to reduce re-offending; to tackle crime and disorder; anti-social behaviour; alcohol and substance misuse; and tackle any other behaviour which has a negative effect on the local environment. There is a requirement to review levels and patterns of crime and disorder by way of a strategic needs assessment every three years. This year there has been consultation between Lincolnshire Safeguarding Adults Board, Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership and Lincolnshire Police, and given the significant crossover between boards and policing, this assessment will be a joint one.

Analysts within the Community Safety Service have been working to analyse the current and emerging issues across Lincolnshire, which impact on community safety and the safeguarding of adults and children residing in or visiting the county. A report will be presented to the respective partnership boards and Lincolnshire Police this week. This will be the evidence base upon which partners can agree their respective priorities for future work, as well joint work on shared areas of concern.